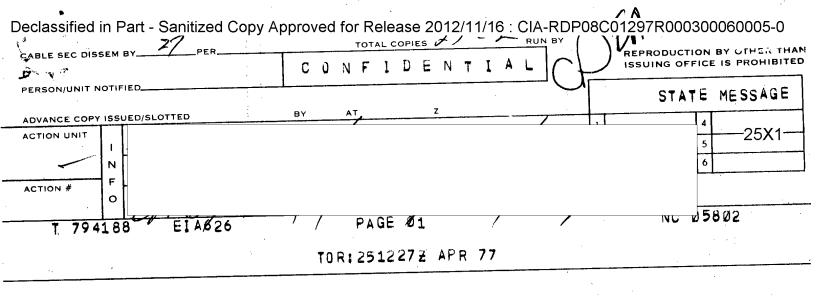
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MAI AND PHON PHISAI AREA IS QUIET, WITH LPDR TROOPS IN FIRM CONTROL OF DONG CHING CHU AND DON SAN KHI ISLANDS. BORDER CROSSING POINT AT NONG KHAI IS OPEN FOR OPERATIONS.
FINNEY
UNQUOTE: WHITEHOUSE

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R 2510302 APR 77 EN AMEMBASSY BANGKOK TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDO 1470 INFO RUMJDH/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 133 BUFNPS/AMEMBASSY PARIS 3233 RUMUFS/AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 223 BUHQHQA/CINCPAC HONOLULU BT CONFIDENTIAL BANGKOK 8945 CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD E0 11652: GDS TAGS: PFOR, OCON, ESCAP, TH, VN SUBJ: VIETNAMESE AND THAT CROSS SHORDS OVER LAGS AT ESCAP PLENARY BEF: (A) BANGKOK 8654 (B) BANGKOK 8830 (C) FBIS BK211310Y APR 77 1, FOLLOWING UP THE LAO-THAI VERBAL SCUFFLE AT ESCAP PLENARY APR 20 (REF A), VIETNAMESE CHIEF DELEGATE DINH BA THI TOOK UP THE CUDGELS IN HIS OWN SPEECH APR 22. STATING THAT SRV FULLY SUPPORTS LAG POSITION ON QUESTION OF LAG-THAI RELATIONS AND LAO ACCUSATION THAT THAILAND IS HARBORING LAO REBELS, HE SAID THAT IF THAILAND WANTS A BETTER RELATIONSHIP WITH LAOS, RTG SHOULD LIVE UP TO THE LETTER AND SPIRIT OF THE THAI-LAG JOINT COMMUNIQUE OF AUGUST 3, 1976. 2. MFA INTERNATIONAL DRGANIZATION DIRGEN PHIRAPHONG KASEMSI USED RIGHT OF REPLY TO ASK THAT PROBLEMS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES SHOULD BE LEFT UP TO THEM TO SETTLE WITHOUT INTERFERENCE OF THIRD COUNTRIES. HE EXPRESSED RTG HOPE FOR DIALOGUE WITH VIETNAMESE THROUGH VISIT OF SRV FOREIGN MINISTER NGUYEN DUY TRINH, INVITATION FOR WHICH WAS CONVEYED IN FOREIGN MINISTER UPPADIT PACHARIYANGKUN'S MESSAGE TO HIM LAST NOV 15. 3. ACCORDING TO THE NATION OF APR 24. SRV HAS ASKED FOR RIGHT TO MAKE REJOINDER TO THAT REPLY. ARTICLE SAID VIETNAMESE REPLY IS EXPECTED TO BE DISTRIBUTED IN WRITTEN FORM RATHER THAN BE MADE OBALLY. THI TOLD REPORTERS THROUGH A DEPUTY THAT HIS EXPRESSION OF SUPPORT FOR LADS WAS "A NATURAL STAND BECAUSE THE TWO COUNTRIES ARE LIKE BROTHERS" AND CANNOT BE CONSIDERED AS INTERFERENCE. (COMMENT: OBVIOUSLY, PHIRAPHONG'S CRITICISM OF THI'S REMARKS HIT HOME, END COMMENT.) 4. ALTHOUGH VIETNAMESE, LAG, AND THAT HAVE BEEN MEETING TOGETHER PRIVATELY IN CONTEXT OF MEKONG COMMITTEE DISCUSSIONS (REF 8). VIETNAMESE AND THAI DO NOT APPEAR TO HAVE HAD QUIET TALKS OF CONFIDENTIAL

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THEIR OWN, THI MADE INTERESTING STATEMENT IN HIS APR 22 SPEECH THAT HIS "SOLE PURPOSE" IN BEING IN BANGKOK WAS TO ATTEND ESCAP MEETING. FRIENDLY EMBASSY TELLS US THAT PHIRAPHONG HAS TRIED TWICE TO INTEREST VIETNAMESE IN DISCUSSING BILATERAL ISSUES. HE SAID THE VIETNAMESE REFUSED BY SAYING THAT IT HAD ALREADY BEEN AGREED THAT POINT OF CONTACT BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WAS TO BE IN VIENTIANE AND THAT IS WHERE THEY WANT IT TO REMAIN. 5. APPEARING TO SUPPORT THE VIEW THAT THAI-VIETNAMESE RELETIONS ARE NOT ABOUT TO MOVE FORWARD, APR 21 ISSUE OF VIETNAMESE MILITARY NEWSPAPER QUAN DOI NHAN DAN DESCRIBED AS CONCOCTED "RUMORS AND FABRICATIONS" REPORTS THAT THAT AVIATION DELEGATION WAS ABOUT TO FLY TO VIET-NAM; THE "ASSUMPTION" THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WERE ESTABLISHED IN AUGUST, 1976; THAT THE NEXT STEP IS AN EXCHANGE OF AMBASSADORS: AND THAT RTG IS AWAITING OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THESE MATTERS WITH VIETNAMESE DELEGATION TO ESCAP. ARTICLE CONCLUDED BY ACCUSING THE THAI OF MASSISTING THE U.S. IMPERIALISTS IN IMPLEMENTING A NEO-GOLONIALIST POLICY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA" (REF C), WHITEHOUSE